

# Speak Out

Have an opinion or a question about a public issue? Post it anytime at the Public Issues Forums at [www.newszap.com](http://www.newszap.com). It is a hometown forum so visit the page as often as you would like and share your comments (but no personal attacks or profanities, please). You can also make a comment by calling our Speak Out 24-hour opinion line at 623-445-2850 ext. 2. Comments will be published in the newspaper as space permits.

**NEW LAW DOES NOTHING FOR EQUALITY:** As usual, another good-intentioned law was not researched far enough and the only the honest hard workers will abide by it. The criminals will remain and keep coming. No equality, again – a bad day for Arizona and America.

**STEP UP AND PROTEST CLIQUES, BULLIES:** Regarding HOAs and clubhouse rules: If the cliques and local bullies have spoiled the fun of retirement, protest to the management corporation, ‘You must pay to stay.’ Don’t let them tell you it’s not against the laws of good manners and management.

**CANDIDATES WILL HOPEFULLY START WATCHING PBS:** Let’s hope the candidates can take a little time to watch the programs on PBS that educate the public with information from learned people, as seen on the program “NOW” – Charlie Rose and Bill Moyers and others. You should be watching, too.

**LEARN ENGLISH TO VOTE AMERICAN WAY:** I just received my primary election ballot. The book is written in both English and Spanish. I, being an American-born citizen, am getting pretty fed up. Mexicans and foreigners came here to assimilate with the American people and learn our language and our culture. It is wrong for the voter registration to print it both in English and Spanish. This is not the America I grew up with and I am pretty fed up with the Spanish language being shoved down my throat and delivered in my mail. It’s time to learn English if you want to be an American citizen and vote the American way. Learn English.

**NUMBERS ARE COVERED FOR SAFETY:** In response to the “Be-ware of Dreamland Villa autos for sale” story published in the Aug. 5, 2008 edition of the *Mesa Independent*, has the person not heard about having your VIN number covered? Because what is going on now is they will come by, take the VIN, take it to the automotive dealer and say, “I lost my keys to this car and I need a set of new ones,” and guess they get them and then they can come back and steal your car. That is why the VIN numbers are covered – so they cannot be read.

**WHO WILL HELP DECIDE YOUR VOTE?:** In the coming elections, there are the journalists, the reporters and the muckrakers – who will help you decide your vote?

**POLITICIANS SHOULD TAKE HINT FROM OLYMPICS:** Three cheers for all of the Olympic participants. Too bad our politicians can’t take a lesson from their dedication to perfection.

**WILL OTHER NATIONS STOP RUSSIAN AGGRESSION?:** After today, we’ll see just how effective the other nations of the world can be to stop this Russian aggression on a neighbor. Or will they just buckle under without assisting each other as friendly allies?

**RUSSIAN INVASION IS STILL ABOUT OIL:** Don’t be surprised if part of Russia’s excuse for invading Georgia will be, “Well, it’s no different than the way the Americans save the Iraqis.” After all, it’s still about oil – no matter what anyone says, it’s still about oil.

**MPS CUSTODIANS, OPERATIONS RECEIVED NO RAISE:** In response to the “MPS employees should be very happy” Speak Out published in the Aug. 12, 2008 edition of the *Mesa Independent*, well, that was the teachers. Custodians and operations – my husband is a facilities assistant with 28 years of working for Mesa Public Schools. This is the first time he’s never received a raise. Zero raise. In response to the “New teachers given brunch” story published in the Aug. 12, 2008 edition of the *Mesa Independent*, Mesa schools need to get their priorities straight and get this district running. It’s going to the ground. The superintendent is the worst.

**FIRE, HEALTH HAZARD ON 98TH PLACE:** In response to the “Constant Christmas: Veteran explains toy display” story published in the Aug. 12, 2008 edition of the *Mesa Independent*, when I go by there to go to Apache Junction, I roll up my windows – it’s such a bad smell. It’s a fire hazard and a health hazard. It needs to go. I don’t know how many times we’ve talked about this.

**WILL EMERGENCY ROOM EASE WAITING TIMES?:** In response to the “Banner Baywood breaks ground on new ER” From the Editor published in the Aug. 12, 2008 edition of the *Mesa Independent*, that’s nice. It’s a good thing to have – however, are they going to be 31 minutes from patient to doctor? Or is it going to be an eight-hour wait as usual?

*Editor’s Note: The following comment was taken from our public issues forums at [www.newszapforums.com/forum15](http://www.newszapforums.com/forum15).*

**WHY CAN’T SLOWER DRIVING BECOME HABIT?:** It seems to me that when gas was over \$4 a gallon and everybody was screaming about the prices, people actually were driving slower on the freeway to conserve. Now that gas has “eased” its way back below the magical \$4 barrier, I’ve noticed that people have returned to their normal driving habits. I travel the U.S. 60 freeway every day to get to work and the driving speeds seem to have increased dramatically. Have we forgotten so soon the pain we have all been subjected to with the high cost of fuel? We have truly become our own worst enemies when it comes to doing what will help us the most if it causes us a little pain. Leave for work five to 10 minutes earlier, drive slower and save some money. It worked for a little while. Why can’t we make it a habit?

## Public issues forums

Join the discussion of important issues at [newszap.com](http://newszap.com). Topics include:

- **Mesa issues:** [www.newszapforums.com/forum15/](http://www.newszapforums.com/forum15/)
- **Apache Junction issues:** [www.newszapforums.com/forum7/](http://www.newszapforums.com/forum7/)
- **Chandler issues:** [www.newszapforums.com/forum13/](http://www.newszapforums.com/forum13/)
- **Gilbert issues:** [www.newszapforums.com/forum14/](http://www.newszapforums.com/forum14/)
- **Queen Creek issues:** [www.newszapforums.com/forum27/](http://www.newszapforums.com/forum27/)

Go to [newszap.com](http://newszap.com), click on your community and then on “community forums and links.”

## From the Editor

# Workshop offers advice to ‘Strive and Thrive’

By Todd Hoover

Independent Newspapers

The Maricopa County Colleges Small Business Development Center and the Mesa Office of Economic Development partnered to present “How to Strive and Thrive in Tough Times,” a free small business seminar, Aug. 13 at the Mesa Utilities Community Room, 640 N. Mesa Drive in downtown Mesa.

“During these financial economic crunches, we’ve actually reached out to the community and tried to help them – give them some tools, some guidance, some resources to help them be more successful,” said Amy Morales, project assistant for the Mesa Gateway Area in southeast Mesa.

The seminar was formulated by Ms. Morales and Luis Reynoso, a business analyst for the Small Business Development Center.

“They are very well-received by the community because we do provide some fresh ideas,” Mr. Reynoso said of the seminars.

The seminar consisted of an open house and registration, a welcome by Mr. Reynoso and

presentations by representatives of the Interface Financial Group, M&I Bank and Mesa’s office of economic development, chamber of commerce, building safety division and tax and licensing office. Ms. Morales said 40 people pre-registered for the seminar, but she expected about 10 walk-ins.

“(There are) people from the community, business owners, those individuals seeking questions on small buildings, city processes, financing options or what have you,” said Mike Paredes, the Mesa Office of Economic Development’s project manager.

Mr. Reynoso said “How to Strive and Thrive in Tough Times” focused primarily on financing and marketing.

“Marketing is the life source of a business – if they don’t do marketing, they don’t sell,” he explained.

He said several business owners are busy “working in the busi-



Todd Hoover

# Letters

## Obama will leave

### U.S. with only change

In response to the “Do not vote for McCain” Speak Out published in the July 8, 2008 edition of the *Mesa Independent*, if we vote for that other fellow who is calling for “change,” he has said he will push to raise the capital gains taxes from the current 15 percent to 28 percent, raise the tax on dividends from the current 15 percent to 30 percent and expand the inheritance tax, to just mention a few changes. If he’s elected, about all we will have left is some change.

Ariel Ricks  
Sunland Village East

## City extorts residents with utility increases

In response to the “Utility billing costs increase” story pub-

## Letters Policy

The purpose of our opinion page is to provide an open forum for our readers. We seek to stimulate community debate, not to dominate or control it.

We welcome and read all letters. Please include your address and phone number so we can contact you for clarification or confirmation. Because of limited space, we may condense or edit letters. We do not publish form letters, copies or letters written to other publications. The shorter the letter, the better its chance of publication. Letters should be no more than 500 words. Readers may post letters on our Web site at [www.newszap.com](http://www.newszap.com).

lished in the Aug. 5, 2008 edition of the *Mesa Independent*, quoting President Ronald Reagan’s famous statement: “Here we go again.”

Mesa’s good old boys’ dastardly deed of constantly raising utility rates is criminal. It is putting those who can least afford it in the poor house.

The damning part of it is using the so-called “utility profits” to run the city – although hidden – is a tax, pure and simple. They’ve

convinced the users of it being profits to get around the electorate.

The massive “profits” collected are in reality not profits at all – they are overcharges that should be paid back to utility users on a patronage basis.

This act is just one of many ways the sneaky small group of extortionists who have complete control of city hall to extort the people of Mesa out of their hard-earned money as they have done

for decades. Case closed.

Kirby Allan  
Mesa

## Debris display is not a worthy tribute

In response to the “Constant Christmas: Veteran explains toy display” story published in the Aug. 12, 2008 edition of the *Mesa Independent*, my husband and I have driven by Mr. Higney’s property for six years and it is appalling.

We see no worthy tribute to anybody or anything with the debris that continues to pile up and decay there.

Mr. Higney needs to clean up his property and, if he wants to have a permanent tribute, then put in a flag or something that is not offensive.

Patricia Cox  
Mesa

## Guest Commentary

# Program benefits public, fire crews, students

By Warren Sprecher

In 1998, the Connector Volunteer Program was developed as a partnership between Mesa Community College and the Mesa Fire Department.

The goal of this partnership was to design and implement a program as a resource for the Mesa Fire Department, as well as a service-learning site for Mesa Community College students.

The fire department responds to many non-emergency 911 calls. However, it was determined that there are many social needs that are beyond the scope of the fire department’s crews expertise, as well as the requirement to return these crews to service as quickly as possible so that they are available to respond to the next emergency.

To better serve the citizens in the community, as well as helping Mesa Fire crews stay in service, volunteers are trained to recognize these special needs and link citizens to the appropriate resources.

The program is designed to provide social service assistance in the city of Mesa after the initial 911 call.

- Services include:
- Social service referrals
  - Elder care referrals
  - Homeless shelter needs
  - Transportation
  - Fire victim assistance
  - Financial referral
  - Motorist assistance

The program began with 20 volunteers with limited hours of operations. Today, nearly 600 volunteers have been trained.

Furthermore, service hours

have been extended. Connector volunteers currently operate 7 a.m.-10 p.m., seven days a week, 365 days a year.

The Connector Program has received local and national recognition for its assistance in helping provide community support and linking residents to social service agencies.

In 2003, the program received the Maricopa Community College Outstanding Community College Service Award acknowledging its role in providing essential community support services.

Additionally, Connector volunteers can earn credit through the Service Learning Program at Mesa Community College.

The mission of the Center for Service-Learning is to promote excellence in teaching and learning through the integration of aca-

demic study with active service.

The Center for Service-Learning collaborates with the community, encourages civic engagement, promotes personal growth and fosters social responsibility.

Connector volunteers can earn money to pay for college, graduate school or to pay back qualified student loans, through the AmeriCorps Program.

Although we are a partner with Mesa Community College, the Connector Program is open to all individuals 18 years and older. We have volunteers from all walks of life as well as all age groups.

To learn more about this distinguished program, please contact us at 480-644-5042.

*Editor’s Note: Warren Sprecher is the Mesa Fire Department’s fire and life safety specialist.*

## Guest Commentary

# Recycle for Reading: A two-for-one deal

By Willie Black

Who doesn’t like a two-for-one deal? It’s an even bigger plus when the deal is already great even without the added bonus.

Take, for example, recycling. As we all know, recycling benefits the environment tremendously. It conserves natural resources, reduces energy consumption, extends the life of the landfill and is able to help foster a sustainable integrated solid waste management system.

But did you know that now here in the city of Mesa, it can also help raise money for the Mesa Library?

The Recycle for Reading Program officially launched on July 1, issuing a challenge to all Mesa residents participating in the Blue Barrel Recycle Program to become even better recyclers and help raise up to \$25,000 for the purchase of new library material.

Here’s how it works: In fiscal year 2007-08, Mesa residents recycled 35,376 tons of material in their blue recycle barrels but still threw away more than 124,000 tons of trash in their black trash barrels.

Unfortunately, even though everything cannot be recycled, a study conducted a few years ago indicated that about 25 percent of what was being thrown into the trash could be recycled under Mesa’s current recycling program.

This highlights the fact that the potential to recycle more in the blue barrel does exist. So the challenge issued to Mesa residents is recycle more and a finan-

cial contribution will be made to the Mesa Library.

For every additional pound of material recycled in Mesa’s Blue Barrel Recycle Program now through June 30, 2009 that exceeds the total amount recycled in fiscal year 2007-08, a direct contribution will be made for the purchase of new library material, up to a maximum grand total of \$25,000.

Reaching this target is as simple as every household recycling just one additional pound of material every week. If every household does this, the goal would be reached in no time.

However, just as it is important for Mesa residents to recycle more, it is equally important to only recycle acceptable items.

Placing non-acceptable material into the blue recycle barrel jeopardizes the entire truckload of material and puts the recycling efforts of others at risk.

Everyone is encouraged to become familiar with Mesa’s recycling programs by calling the Mesa Recycling Hotline at 480-644-2222 or visiting the city’s Web site at [www.cityofmesa.org](http://www.cityofmesa.org).

Acceptable items:

- Aluminum and metal cans
- Cardboard and paperboard
- Glass jars
- Newspapers
- Magazines and telephone books
- Milk and juice cartons
- Plastic bottles, jugs and jars
- Office paper
- Junk mail

If you are still not convinced

about the benefits of recycling, consider this:

- Enough aluminum is thrown away to rebuild our commercial air fleet four times every year.
- Recycled aluminum reduces pollution by 95 percent.
- Americans use 100 million steel cans every day.
- Recycling steel saves 75 percent of the energy that would be used to create steel from raw materials, enough to power 18 million homes.
- Glass can be reused an infinite number of times; over 41 billion glass containers are made each year.
- Recycled paper generates 95 percent less air pollution: each ton saves 60 pounds of air pollution.
- Recycling a ton of paper saves 17 trees and 7,000 gallons of water.
- Every year, enough paper is thrown away to make a 12-foot wall from New York to California.

• Americans buy an estimated 28 billion plastic water bottles every year. Nearly eight out of every 10 bottles will end up in a landfill.

• In 2006, it took more than 17 million barrels of oil (excluding the oil used in transporting the plastic) to produce plastic bottles.

• Recycling a single plastic bottle can conserve enough energy to light a 60-watt light bulb for up to six hours.

• The amount of oil used to produce plastic water bottles in America is enough to fuel about 100,000 cars for a year. (Source: [www.earth911.org](http://www.earth911.org))

So, as mentioned earlier, the Recycle for Reading Program is definitely a two-for-one deal where everyone comes out a winner. Don’t miss your chance to participate.

*Editor’s Note: Willie Black is the director of the Mesa Solid Waste Management Department.*

## Corrections

The *Mesa Independent* strives for accuracy and is pledged to bring errors that have appeared in our newspaper to the attention of our readers. In addition, we offer a “right of reply” to the people about whom we write. Readers who disagree with the content of a news story or the way it was handled or edited are welcome to respond with a letter to the editor or guest commentary and all such letters will be given priority over other submissions. We invite readers to call our newsroom at 480-982-7799 to report an error. Readers may also e-mail their comments to [emesanews@newszap.com](mailto:emesanews@newszap.com).

**Our Purpose...**

The Mesa Independent is published by Independent Newspapers of Arizona. Independent is owned by a unique trust that enables this newspaper to pursue a mission of journalistic service to the citizens of the community. Since no dividends are paid, the company is able to thrive on profit margins below industry standards. All after-tax surpluses are reinvested in Independent’s mission of journalistic service, commitment to the ideals of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, and support of the community’s deliberation of public issues.

**We Pledge ...**

- To operate this newspaper as a public trust
- To help our community become a better place to live and work, through our dedication to conscientious journalism.
- To provide the information citizens need to make their own intelligent decisions about public issues.
- To report the news with honesty, accuracy, purposeful neutrality, fairness, objectivity, fearlessness and compassion.
- To use our opinion pages to facilitate community debate, not to dominate it with our own opinions.
- To disclose our own conflicts of interest or potential conflicts to our readers.
- To correct our errors and to give each correction the prominence it deserves.
- To provide a right to reply to those we write about.
- To treat people with courtesy, respect and compassion.

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